GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1377
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2007
FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC TELEPHONE BOOTHS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of public telephone booths functioning as on date, State-wise;

(b) whether the said booths are not functioning properly;

(c) if so, whether the public telephone booths have been closed in several States during the last three years;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(e) the effective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure proper and satisfactory functioning of public telephone booths located at railway stations/other public places?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) The data of Public Telephone Booths [Public Call Offices (PCOs)] excluding Village Panchayat Telephones is maintained circle-wise and not State-wise by BSNL/MTNL. The number of PCOs functioning in all the circles as on 30.09.2007 is given in the Annexure.

(b) Generally these PCOs are working properly. However, at times some PCOs do remain faulty for longer duration on account of reasons beyond control such as damage to underground cables due to digging of roads by other agencies and natural calamities.

(c) & (d) The details of PCOs closed during the last three years are given in the Annexure. There are various reasons of closure of PCOs. Some of the reasons are,
(i) franchisees are getting some other employment,
(ii) franchisees are shifting to some other cities,
(iii) death of franchisee,
(iv) closure due to non-payment,
(v) churning to other operators,
(vi) reduction in STD/ISD tariff, etc.

(e) The steps taken for proper and satisfactory functioning of PCOs at Railway Stations/other public places by BSNL/MTNL are installation of new CCB PCO instrument in case of theft, replacement in case of damage, priority in repair in case of instrument fault, early repair of cable in case of cable fault, creation of pole less network (to reduce drop wire fault), periodic check up, etc.